

311 Customer Call Center Hampton, Virginia

Population over 146,000

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311 Customer Call Center

Hampton, Virginia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hampton is the first locality in Virginia to establish a 311 Customer Call Center that offers citizens round-the-clock access to city services and information. Residents simply dial 311 and reach the warm, friendly voice of call center staff. Customer Advocates (call-takers) help with everything from reporting a missed trash collection to answering questions about the city budget.

Through the community's strategic planning process, the city found that people were growing increasingly frustrated with local government service delivery. In a world where business can be conducted virtually 24 hours a day, local governments continue to operate their services during traditional business hours, often forcing citizens to take time off from work to do business with their city government.

Problems also surfaced in the city's annual citizen satisfaction survey. This random-sample phone survey had shown decreasing satisfaction with the speed and convenience of accessing city services. Residents said interacting with city government can be frustrating too, with residents complaining it can be difficult to access the right people to help them with their problem. A city resident might call one of 40 plus city telephone numbers in the phone book and get transferred three or more times before getting an answer to their question, if it was answered at all. In short, residents said they wanted: 1) one easy to remember number, 2) to be helped by the first person they talked to, and 3) 24-hour access.

Ever-shrinking sources of revenue would not support such a project, and funding new customer service initiatives would be a challenge. Therefore, the city decided to reengineer city services to generate budgetary savings to fund the initiative. This initiative of *customer delight* is to increase citizen satisfaction with government, which will generate customer loyalty and trust. With this in mind, citizens may be more open to investing in the region and in the expansion of the local tax base.

Thus, the concept for the 311 Customer Call Center was born. In 1997, the FCC reserved 3-1-1 for local government use. Citizens can dial 3-1-1 within city limits (727-8311 outside of Hampton) for non-emergency government-related services. The 311 Customer Call Center is pivotal to the city's overall strategy to redesign the way the city does business with a comprehensive, integrated approach to customer service.

Residents now have easy, convenient access and only need to remember one number to call – 311 – not a confusing lists in the phone book. Hampton's 311 Customer Call Center is citizen service at its best. The 311 slogan, *Just one call does it all*, greatly enhances perceptions of customer convenience and the city's responsiveness to callers.

PROBLEM ASSESSMENT

The city of Hampton, with a population of more than 146,000 residents, conducted a citywide strategic planning effort in 1986 to be followed by another in 1991 and a third in 1998. Few municipalities have undertaken such efforts. Hampton wanted to focus the organization and the community on critical issues. At a time of limited resources, these are “make it or break it” issues for the city’s future. Hampton is currently updating this strategic plan in 2003-2004 and the first draft can be reviews at www.hampton.gov/community-plan/ .

What may be surprising is that city officials made a concerted effort to garner significant community involvement in creating a strategic community plan. A record number of residents, businesses, neighborhoods and non-profits participated in its development and committed to making it a reality.

Seven critical issues emerged from these processes, which are used as the foundation for decision-making in the city. One of those critical issues was the concept of *Customer Delight* or the government-customer relationship. The vision statement established for this issue was: “The city of Hampton will exceed its customers’ expectations by providing unparalleled service.”

Hampton’s Opportunity

We live in a very customer-oriented world – virtually anything a person wants to do can be done 24 hours a day (24 hour banking with ATMs; 24 hour shopping via internet, television and catalogue networks; 24 hour education through on-line universities, etc.). While the rest of the world has adapted to become more customer-oriented, local governments typically have failed to keep pace. Most local governments continue to operate their services during traditional business hours, with emergency services as the notable exception.

Most people find it difficult to interact with city government, having to take time off from work to do business with their local government. This fact, coupled with a world that is increasingly geared toward consumer convenience, causes many to feel frustrated with local government.

The city found that residents were growing increasingly frustrated with local government service delivery. Problems also surfaced in the city’s annual citizen satisfaction survey, showing a decreasing satisfaction with the speed and convenience of accessing city services.

Residents said interacting with city government was frustrating too, with residents complaining it was difficult to access the right people to help them with their problem. A city resident might call one of 40 city telephone numbers in the phone book and get transferred three or more times before getting an answer to their question, if it was answered at all. Residents didn’t know – and didn’t care – what department or section was required to fulfill their request. Issues often crossed departmental lines, making it impossible for a resident to know who to call about pending issues.

In short, residents said they wanted: 1) one easy to remember number, 2) to be helped by the first person they talked to, and 3) 24-hour access.

The Goal

The City recognizes the importance of providing service that exceeds customer expectations – for if we provide only satisfactory service, we will never engender the type of customer loyalty or trust we will need to make strategic investments in other areas. Customers want excellent core service delivery before they are willing to pay for investments in the region or in the expansion of the local tax base.

Ever-shrinking sources of revenue would not support such a project as a call center, and funding new customer service initiatives would be a challenge. Therefore, the city decided to reengineer city services to generate budgetary savings to fund the initiative. This initiative of *customer delight* is to increase citizen satisfaction with government, which will generate customer loyalty and trust. With this in mind, citizens may be more open to investing in the region and in the expansion of the local tax base. The outcomes for the 311 Customer Call Center included the following:

Increased customer delight with both the convenience and ease of interacting with city services for information or problem resolution. The 311 Customer Call Center will operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, allowing citizens access to government services when it's most convenient for them and by using just one easy-to-remember number.

Decrease in the amount of time it takes to complete transactions for each process/service. Each department will develop a timeline for each service, allowing customer advocates to commit to a time frame for problem resolution, even increasing the speed of services in some cases.

Customer-focused approach with one person authorized to dispatch service, answer a question, and find the right person to solve a problem or research a problem and call back the customer. There will be a decrease in the number of phone calls transferred with knowledgeable customer advocates whose goal is to delight the customer.

Ability to evaluate the performance of each department and resolve problems proactively before they affect the customer. Software will identify trends, such as a high number of sewer stoppages in a neighborhood or a street that has been missed for garbage pick up four times in two months. Good customer service will not be enough to sustain positive customer feelings about city government if the basic services offered are not similarly improved.

Increase the number of residents reporting both concerns and positive comments about city service. Citizens who report concerns, which are addressed, become satisfied customers.

Advance e-government to demonstrate the effective use of technology to improve services to citizens and to use technology as an enabler to breakdown traditional boundaries between governmental units, departments and agencies. Providing 'seamless government' to residents.

Accomplish the reengineering process with little additional revenues being expended. City employees reallocated from other departments will staff the 311 Customer Call Center.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In September 1998, a 311 Customer Call Center Project Team was formed. The team consisted of 15 members from 7 different city departments. The team also included a resident/business owner who was an original member of the strategic planning process. The project manager was assigned full-time to the project; however, all other team members worked on the project in addition to their regular duties. The project team had direct oversight of seeing the Call Center develop from a concept into a state-of-the-art facility.

During the first 3 months the project team conducted research. In late 1998 only five or six '311' call centers were operational. The team wanted to determine whether any other cities had attempted to address the customer service issue. Site visits were planned. Each city had a different approach to the issue and the goal was to glean the best from each to develop a hybrid customer service process for Hampton. The team chose to visit Dallas, Chicago, Baltimore and Charlotte's call centers and also visited USAA Insurance Company in Norfolk, Virginia for a private company perspective. The following is a brief summary of four site visits.

Dallas, Texas

Dallas had a combined 311/911 center. Operators were cross-trained in both 911 and 311 calls and training was extensive. Using the combined center approach, Dallas was able to expand the call taker positions as the calls ebbed and flowed from 911 to 311. If 911 calls increased, Dallas was able to 'move' call takers assigned to the 311 function, into the 911 queue using technology.

The team's impression was that Dallas did a good job increasing the 911 positions, but was not directly focused on customer service. A 911 call-taker, by the very nature of the job, must provide some distance and disconnect from the caller/victim in order to provide the emergency service. The 911 operators' concerns are *what* has happened and *where* is the victim. A customer service representative, on the other hand, needs to develop a relationship with the caller in order to provide service above and beyond the customer's expectation. The team concluded that the two different personalities required to provide two different services may be difficult or impossible, to combine.

Chicago, Illinois

Chicago approached the 311 call taking process by choosing to combine the police non-emergency number with the Mayor's Office of Inquiry and Information (MOII) under the 311 number. The combined center was in the implementation phase at the time of the visit. Chicago's system offered a unique and valuable feature to the 311 call taking process. A "zip plus four" feature allows the center to direct messages to a specific area of the city in the event that a major incident occurs that requires citizen notification. Also, the city was writing legislation to allow the ANI/ALI function of the 911 system to be applied to the 311 call taking process in order to obtain the name and address of the incoming caller.

Baltimore, Maryland

Baltimore was an example of a separate 911/311 call center where emergency and non-emergency calls are taken by different staffs. The 311 function in Baltimore was staffed with light-duty police officers and designed for police non-emergency calls only, and was advertised as the same. It was

unclear at that time, whether Baltimore would expand the call center to include other city services. The team felt that Baltimore developed a unique way to utilize a rather large group of light duty police personnel in an information providing function. However, they had not addressed the true nature of customer service.

Charlotte, North Carolina

Although Charlotte was not using the '311 service', they had a centralized call center. Charlotte chose to keep their customer service function separate from their public safety call taking centers and really emphasized the "service" aspect. They focused on the *quality* of the transaction as being more important than the *quantity* the customer service representative handles. The customer service center was open from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Weekends and after-hours calls were handled by a private answering service for a per call fee.

The team concluded that although all of these centers were sophisticated and relatively successful in their own way, none of the call centers addressed all the specific issues Hampton was trying to accomplish in customer service.

Beginning in January of 1999, the team began planning, designing and developing Hampton's model. The goal was to complete the project and implement the call center before the end of the year. During the next nine months the following activities took place.

Develop project time-line. The project manager developed and administered a detailed time-line of the entire project. Individual tasks were outlined in order to drive functional areas of the project. This time-line became the driving force of the project and the agenda for project meetings.

Gathering statistical data. Call volumes and statistics throughout the organization were collected and analyzed. The most critical calculation for the 311 Team was to resolve the number of individuals required to staff the center. That number became the foundation of all other decisions regarding space, technology requirements, and drove the entire process. In order to determine the correct number of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions required to staff the 311 center, a telephone traffic study was designed and performed using information collected from internal and external automatic call distribution (ACD) systems.

Development of informational databases. This task was the most time consuming. Certain members of the team went to each department to gather frequently asked questions and departmental services provided to residents and businesses. Information was gathered, verified and then loaded into software programs throughout the project.

Facility identified for conversion into a call center. An old courtroom and adjacent office space was identified as a good location for the call center. The Facilities Division in the city did all the refurbishing and construction, while Information Technology designed and constructed the networking and telecommunications infrastructure.

Internal 'buy-in'. The city manager's office conducted briefings to upper management of the project status. A concerted effort was made to persuade and assure identified departments that it was in their best interest to willingly give positions to the call center. Statistical information was provided to department heads and assurance was given that when the positions moved to the call center, so would the calls. The call center would hand-select employees that would be specifically suited to customer service and a call center environment. Departments would then be 'relieved' of answering call and therefore be able to dedicate themselves to their core business.

Department heads were also invited to participate in staff training. They were given the opportunity to speak to the selected employees about their respective departments. They spoke on department philosophy, responsibilities, services and/or provided software training.

The team also concluded that the call center would fall under the city manager's office organizationally to assist in organizational buy-in. The call center was designed to house information on all city departments and not just a select few. This would facilitate overcoming any obstacles the call center may face once it was open.

Internal advertising. Internal advertising of the call center project informed city employees of the project status and upcoming positions for the call center. Emphasis was placed on the importance of the project to the strategic plan and recruiting excellent candidates. The goal was to generate excitement for the project and the upcoming staff positions in the call center.

Selection of staff. Call center positions were open only to city employees. The selection process included keyboarding skills, personality testing, drug testing, criminal history background checks and a panel interview process. The rigorous selection process was necessary to identify the best-qualified applicants.

Training selected staff. A training program was designed to focus on four primary areas: 1) organizational structure and responsibilities; 2) customer service skills and telephone etiquette; 3) team building skills; and 4) software systems. Training was conducted prior to implementation.

Within 12 months, the 311 Customer Call Center became operational in September 1999. The initial operating hours were considered normal business hours for local government, Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. During the second month, the Call Center expanded the hours to 11:00 p.m. using the existing staff positions. Again in January 2000, the hours were extended to weekends and holidays.

Costs

Minimal new costs were incurred to implement the 311 Customer Call Center. First, a one time capital outlay of approximately \$350,000 was used to purchase equipment and re-furbish a vacant courtroom for the facility.

Hampton partnered with vendors to obtain enhanced call center technologies. Verizon (then Bell Atlantic) developed the 311 service. The database for residents is based on geographic boundaries and when Hampton residents dial 311, it is automatically routed to the call center. A 7-digit number was also needed for customers calling from outside of the city limits.

Lucent Technologies (now Avaya) provided the telephone switch. The telephone switch in city hall did not provide the enhancements Hampton was looking for. The phone-switch solution provided future growth potential, enhanced automated call distribution (ACD) reporting, message capabilities, estimated-wait-times for customers in queue, and a software survey package.

Furthermore, network servers, software and equipment were needed to tie the call center into the various departments that provide direct service to residents. Web interfaces and client software were installed to provide every possible piece of information available electronically to the Customer Advocates. The call center also partnered with a vendor to provide a 'knowledge management' software package to house the vast amounts of information on service processes and city events.

Only two new positions were created. Hampton did not have a call center manager position; therefore, a new position was established. The second position – the information manager – was established as a liaison to departments to coordinate information and maintain the database.

Nine full-time positions were re-allocated to the Call Center from various city departments for the Customer Advocate (call-taker) positions. These were open for competition to city employees only, so as to hire call takers that had excellent customer service skills, background knowledge of city operations and personalities suited for this type of environment. A minimum of new money for part-time call takers was necessary to cover weekends and holidays. The center was able to use creative scheduling to cover the 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. shift with the original 9 positions.

RESULTS

During the first full year of operations in 2000, the call center received over 221,000 calls for service and information. For 2003, the call center processed over 302,000 calls. The average call volume has increased from 450 calls per day to approximately 750-800 calls on a daily basis, with approximately 19-20 percent of the volume on evenings and weekends. These figures directly confirm that residents wanted to interact when it is most convenient for them. The increase in call volume attests to the ease and convenience of residents interacting with city hall.

The Call Center has been operational since September 1999, and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Over 93% of survey participants are reporting very-good to excellent Call Center service and over 83% reporting improved impressions of city services. Only 6% of the participants report an unchanged impression and the remaining 11% were indifferent about the issue.

The 311 Call Center has also impacted the organization internally as well. A few specific examples of how the call center impacted other departments are worth noting.

Public Works

The Public Works Department had a 'mini' call center and all of those positions were reallocated to the new call center. Public Works is in the business of fixing pot holes, laying drainage pipe, repairing traffic lights, etc., and did not necessarily have the best customer service people answering the phones. The call center has customer service oriented staff that have the skills necessary to satisfy upset callers and resolve complaints, which in turn, creates a better

relationship with that department's customers. Public Works also received expanded hours of phone coverage – from a 40-hour workweek, to 24-hour, 7 days week coverage – with no increase in staff or budget.

Assessors Office

The Assessors Office handled 200-250 calls on a daily basis. The office had three positions answering the phones, handling walk-in traffic and various other clerical duties, often falling behind in data entry. The statistics showed that approximately 1.3 full time equivalents were needed to handle the call volume, but only one FTE was reallocated to the call center. Currently, the office now only handles approximately 20 calls per day and the front desk staff is able to keep up with their clerical duties and their data entry responsibilities are ahead of schedule.

911 Call Center

Prior to the 311 call center, the 911 center handled emergency Public Works calls after-hours and made various emergency call outs for other departments as well. The 311 Call Center has reduced the public works emergency calls in 911 by 98%. Currently only 30-45 calls are received in 911 on a monthly basis for city services other than public safety.

Another benefit to 911 is that the 911 operators no longer need to spend time researching where a misdirected informational call needs to go within the organization. After a call is identified as a non-public safety service, the 911 operator immediately and conveniently, connects the caller to 311 and then goes directly back to what they do best – handling true public safety emergencies.

Hampton's 311 Call Center and EOC Operations

The call center is well established after 4 years of operations and is considered 'essential personnel' during unusual events. By supporting disaster recovery departments such as Public Works, Codes Compliance and Parks Operations, the call center must be available during emergencies to receive and dispatch essential services to the community.

As a result, the call center has worked very closely with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and has developed an emergency operation plan. Working with Verizon, an emergency switch redirect plan was established. If the call center needed to evacuate, or if phone connectivity was lost, a bank of cell phones are used to continue services to the community. With such a flexible plan, the call center can evacuate and establish a temporary answering point virtually anywhere.

311 and Hurricane Isabel 2003

Hurricane Isabel hit the Hampton Roads area September 18, 2003, and Hampton suffered major damage. Thousands of trees fell, the entire city was without power and three coastal neighborhoods were destroyed. The storm surpassed records set by the Storm of 1933.

Three days prior to the storm, the city issued a mandatory evacuation order for low-lying areas. The 311 Call Center began to see a major increase in calls long before the storm made landfall. Residents were taking the evacuation order seriously and wanted more information.

The day before the storm, September 17th, the Call Center had record call volumes of more than 4 times the average. The entire staff was on duty and preparing for the storm. Emergency procedures were activated and evacuation equipment was on stand-by and ready.

On September 18th, Isabel made landfall. By 11:00 a.m., downtown Hampton lost power and the 311 Call Center went on emergency generator. By early evening, the entire city was without power and major flood levels from the storm surge began to panic residents that stayed.

The 911 Center was also faced with several challenges during the storm. Radio communications was lost for a short time. A neighboring jurisdiction lost 911 service and Hampton's 911 began taking emergency calls for the neighboring jurisdiction. Hampton's 911 Center was struggling during the storm to maintain communications with the public for emergencies and with units on the road.

Over the next several days, communicating with the public became problematic. With little power restored, residents had limited access to information. Television was not available to most and many radio stations were off the air for a period of time. Even the few radio stations that were on the air, had limited and sparse information. Phone service was also problematic, but many residents had some means of phone service. The 311 Call Center was often the sole source of information for a large portion of the community.

Rumors and problems began to surface due to the lack of news. Residents began calling with rumors of unsafe water, ice distribution points, food sources and refrigeration for medications. Problems surrounding unsafe and condemned homes, dangerous trees, lack of gasoline and power, and sanitary conditions such as spoiled food continued to alarm the community.

The 311 Call Center operated in an emergency operational mode for 2 weeks and staffed accordingly. Public Works (tree and storm debris clean-up) and Codes Compliance (damage assessment and building permits) also continued to be challenged with storm related activity. Due to the call center supporting the major storm clean-up departments, calls for service continued to be high. Call volumes did not begin to decrease until the 4th week after the event.

The public relied on the call center for the most accurate and updated information available. Newspapers were not always up-to-date with last minute changes in information and the electronic media did not always broadcast information specific to just Hampton.

The 311 Call Center was a valuable asset to the 911 Communications Center. Hampton's 911 Center was able to focus on true emergency calls for service for police, fire and EMS. Without 311, the extraordinary volume of calls would have ended up in 911 – which could have effectively crippled their operations as they faced their own challenges of radio and phone communications.

During hurricane Isabel, the City of Hampton's 311 Call Center was an accurate, timely and trusted source of information that never lost contact with the public. Hampton was able to control rumors and track trends using effective communications between 311 and the Emergency Operations Center. Residents could make one phone call to 311 and get information, ask for storm debris trash pick up, damage assessment of their home, or ask where they could get a hot meal.

LESSONS LEARNED

A centralized call center is not a new idea in the private sector. However, government has not traditionally focused on customer service to this degree. The call center concept is being considered by several jurisdictions across the country, resulting in numerous visits and inquiries from across the nation. A project of this size can present a challenge. However, by reallocating resources, minimizing capital investment and partnering with vendors, jurisdictions can replicate the project.

Hampton was able to implement the 311 Call Center without adding major cost to the city budget. Departments were already answering the phone calls, but Hampton found a way to do it smarter. Hampton developed a protocol to redirect existing resources to expand services from an 8-hour per day, 5-day service to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This reallocation process can be replicated, making it more financially viable for others to consider a centralized customer call center. Once other jurisdictions learn how to provide enhanced customer service for essentially the same cost, there is really little reason not to replicate this effort. However, some key points should be kept in mind when planning a model similar to Hampton.

Personnel resources are already available within the organization. Accurate call volume analysis is important to identifying positions to re-allocate to a call center. Several factors should be considered when conducting the collection of data such as average call duration time and after-call wrap-up time. Using the automatic ACD raw data to determine phone traffic is useful, but not appropriate to resolve the true volume of calls that will be arriving through the call center. Consider manually counting telephone calls and adjusting for personal and inter-office traffic, deducting calls that required a professional staff member's attention, and omit calls that could be resolved through the use of a phone "tree" menu.

Jurisdictions will need to make a one-time capital investment on equipment, software and location. Close attention should be given to researching software and equipment. Few products are capable of meeting a true 'citizens relationship management' package that can be deployed off the shelf.

Executive support and sponsorship for this project is pivotal to its success. Hampton's call center is strongly supported by the mayor, council and city manager's office. The support and leadership provided by these offices directly contributed to the project being successful. The city manager's office strongly supported the call center concept and made it clear that it would become a reality. This executive sponsorship provided the support and leadership to help overcome obstacles.

Exceptional customer service is a philosophy and culture, not a buzzword. Hampton made a commitment to exceed customers' expectations, not just meet them. Providing customer delight in the call center will not sustain customer satisfaction if the service delivery is not meeting customer expectations. Customer service must go beyond the call center to the service delivered. On-going customer service training in the organization is crucial to future success.

Scripting services and information is key to providing accurate and timely information. Hampton expended considerable time scripting services and information in all departments. Interviews were conducted with front desk staff, employees providing the services, first line supervisors and division managers. Information collected was researched, verified and scripted to provide easy access for the customer advocates taking the calls. Accurate and timely information gathering is an ongoing and crucial aspect of call center effectiveness.

Once established, the call center becomes a critical information source for emergency/unusual events. During the hurricane Isabel disaster, the 311 Call Center was the most accurate and timely source of information for the community. A plan must be in place to provide continued operations, even during the most trying times.

SUMMARY

Hampton has a unique 311 Call Center that several cities have inquired about. Many of the cities that have visited are currently planning to implement a call center very similar to Hampton's model. Several site visits to Hampton have been conducted from surrounding jurisdictions and others not as close. Some of those cities are: Newport News, VA; Virginia Beach, VA; Norfolk, VA; Fairfax, VA; Greensboro, NC; Yonkers, NY; Olathe, KS; Anchorage AK and Scottsdale AZ. Several other communities have requested information and/or conducted telephone interviews as well.

Everyone wants to provide better customer service to residents. The question becomes how to do so without adding a lot of people or expense. Hampton did just that.

As the 311 Customer Call Center grows it will face many new challenges. The long-range plan includes not only being the single point of contact for city departments, but also expanding to include outside agencies that interface with city customers. Three such examples include outside utilities, courts, and other state agency partnerships.

In conclusion, the 311 Customer Call Center was an ambitious reengineering project that most city governments would not undertake. The City of Hampton asked for citizen input during the strategic planning process and made a commitment to make it happen. At a time when local government is encountering declining revenues and increasing citizen dissatisfaction, Hampton is looking at a new way of doing business with its customers – *"Customer Delight"*.

Customer Survey Results - 2002

94.2% Reporting excellent to very good call center service.

82.3% Reporting improved or good impression of city services.

Survey Questions	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Overall Service: Please rate your over-all experience with the Customer Call Center.	2,231	346	83	39	38
Convenience: How do you rate the convenience of working with the customer call center today?	2,061	449	103	38	35
Improved impression of city services: As a result of your interaction with the Customer Call Center today, has your opinion of the City of Hampton's customer service improved?	YES 1,438	NO 195	Already has good impression 712	Unsure 276	

Customer Survey Results – 2003

93.7% Reporting excellent to very good call center service.

84.4% Reporting improved impression of city services.

Survey Questions	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Overall Service: Please rate your over-all experience with the Customer Call Center.	8773	1519	324	192	177
Convenience: How do you rate the convenience of working with the customer call center today?	8159	1842	397	178	170
Improved impression of city services: As a result of your interaction with the Customer Call Center today, has your opinion of the City of Hampton's customer service improved?	YES 5850	NO 645	Already has good impression 2,984	Unsure 983	

Customer Survey Comments

January 23, 2000, 22:14 hrs

Comments: I think this is a wonderful service because **I really needed it tonight**. It's about 10:00 or 10:30, and I'm new in the neighborhood, and I needed to know when the trash pickup is. So I think this is a great service that you have running this late...

February 2, 2000, 10:05 hrs

Comments: Well, the 311 service is very good. I really like it. **It saves time, you don't have to look up a telephone number, you don't have to call around and be directed around different places...**

March 20, 2000, 19:24 hrs

Comments: I'm glad to see that the city of Hampton has this new 311. It's **expedites in services and cuts down on the runaround** to get to the right place to report a problem. I'm glad to see that's implemented, it seems to be working excellent. I've used it more than once; actually seen somebody taking care of a problem 30 minutes after I've called to report a problem. **So I'm very excited about this new 311**, and think it is an asset to the community and for the city of Hampton. I think it's just a great idea. Thanks.

April 28, 2000, 8:57 hrs

Comments: I think the **customer service center is the most impressive service that the city has implemented in my lifetime in the city, and I've been here for over 30 years**. I really do appreciate the fast service. The customer service people always have a very quick and knowledgeable answer. Two thumbs up...

May 24, 2000, 12:12 hrs

Comments: I am very, very pleased with this pro-active approach to customer service. It's putting your money where your mouth is. **I, as a taxpayer, am very happy to pay for this kind of service**. This has been very helpful, convenient, and fast, and easy. **Love it to death**.

January 4, 2001, 19:54 hrs

Comments: Hello, I was **very glad to hear that there was someone at the other end of the phone at 7:42 pm at the city of Hampton**. I appreciate the customer contact that was allowed after hours. It is very hard for most folks to do because the doors usually close at about 4:30 or 5 o'clock in most areas and there's no longer any service. Thank you very much Hampton. You're doing a good job.

April 4, 2001, 14:39 hrs

Comments: My comment with me that the services have become increasingly more effective. **I feel more confident in calling now knowing that I will quickly get the services that the questions answered** that I have asked.

April 20, 2001, 08:59 hrs

Comments: The customer advocate I had today was excellent. I feel like **she really went over the top to help me out** and to give me all the information that I could possibly need or want. She was awesome, thanks.

June 2, 2001, 16:11 hrs

Comments: Yes, I think it's a good idea. I don't know who's the father or the mother of it is, but I think it's nice. My question is, whoever started it, is good. I think somebody in City Council or City Manager's office, one. But it's good idea and **it should be nationwide**. Thanks a lot. Talk to ya'll later.

September 18, 2002, 19:13

Comments: I want to say that I love this service and I hope that other cities do it. This is just a **model of excellence**. I called about several different things, several different things that would have gone probably through ten different departments and your customer advocate was able to answer all of my questions and was able to give me help on everything. I have to say that I love this service and definitely your advocates.

December 17, 2002, 10:51

Comments: I love this service. **Please don't stop it!** Thank you.

December 18, 2002, 9:56

Comments: Hi, I think this is a very good service you started here. I'm new here in Virginia, actually not new, I lived here previously when I was younger but I just moved back. This is great. I found it in the telephone book. This is my first experience. I'm calling, the operator was wonderful. The young girls name was Tammy. She was great, excellent, she gave me all the information. She **went beyond the job**. This is a very good service. This **should have been in the state where I came from previously**. Keep up the good work.

February 2, 2003, 11:59

Comments: I felt like this Call Center was very helpful. I was surprised it was **even available on a Sunday**. I'm glad that it was. The lady who answered the phone was very nice, polite, courteous, and very helpful.

February 3, 2003, 8:22

Comments: Being new to the area I find it **very easy just to dial one number**. I hit all of public works I don't have to go and search through all the different departments. Very good. Thank you, bye

May 7, 2003, 10:10

Comments: This is Mac Akens with Flex Tech, 100 W Mercury Blvd. I called in. I got a representative named Tammy who was absolutely superb in getting all my questions answered, just going extra mile taking care of everything; all questions and concerns that I may have had. I really appreciate this young lady. Look out because we are going to be trying to hire her.

May 12, 2003, 15:55

Comments: This is the **best thing that has ever happened to the city of Hampton**. I enjoy using 311. Every time, every single time I call, the people could not be more pleasant and helpful. Thank you for the service.

June 11, 2003, 7:52

Comments: **I don't know how we ever got along without the Call Center!** They do an outstanding job. They are fast, they are efficient, and they know the answer to any question you want to ask them. Thank you so much.

June 11, 2003, 11:28

Comments: I wish I could remember the name of the woman who assisted me, but it sure **beats rooting around in the Blue Pages for 30 minutes** trying to figure out who it is I'm supposed to call. So it's a big help. Thanks a lot. Bye bye.

August 5, 2003, 7:32

Comments: Hi this is Rose and I work for the company ...**I had a dozen and one questions and she just came right out, answered every question** I had plus even more so went the extra mile for me. I certainly do appreciate that because I live in Newport News and I wasn't sure how Hampton handles their zoning and so forth, and the Assessor's office but I was extremely pleased with all the help she gave me. Thank you.

September 27, 2003, 10:49, 10646777571

Agent: 16

Phone: 851-7416

Comments: I have used the Call Center several times in the past and I have always received excellent service. During this time of cleanup from Hurricane Isabel, I have found that it is just as well put through and in a timely fashion, and I'd like to say "thank you" to the City of Hampton for all that they are doing for the residents.

October 11, 2003, 9:36, 10658829641

Agent: 16

Phone: 826-2101

Comments: I personally think the Call Center service is one of the **great services of the city**. I use it. I am totally impressed with it. I appreciate it. I gain from it because I can always get an answer.

October 20, 2003, 8:40, 10666572413

Agent: 16

Phone: 723-5755

Comments: I'd like to share this dilemma about Hurricane Isabel. I have been very happy with the services that Hampton has been showing the citizens of Hampton. They have been very concerned, truly concerned trying to take care of all the debris and devastation that Isabel threw on everyone...Again, Hampton thank you very much, **you are truly a city of the future**.

November 17, 2003, 9:32, 10690795792

Agent: 09

Phone: 851-0621

Comments: I am Sally Ann Howard and I want to thank the city of Hampton and highly commend you for your outstanding service whenever I call. The service and the help have been exemplary since the storm Isabel. It **makes you feel good to be a citizen of this community**. Again thank you, the service is always superb.